

GIFT BY ELIZABETH SPRAGUE COOLIDGE TO THE
LIBRARY OF CONGRESS

DECEMBER 20, 1924.—Committed to the Committee of the Whole House on
the state of the Union and ordered to be printed

Mr. LUCE, from the Committee on the Library, submitted the
following

REPORT

[To accompany S. J. Res. 152]

Mrs. Elizabeth Sprague Coolidge, who takes great interest in music, and especially in chamber music, wishes to carry on her notable work in its behalf by putting at the command of the music division of the Library of Congress an auditorium, by the use of which the value of that division and its treasures may be increased. She has offered to give \$60,000 for that purpose. It is proposed to place the structure in one of the courts of the library. The expectation is that a comparatively low building with an open space on all four sides between it and the interior walls of the library will serve the end admirably. There will be no interference with the facilities and uses of the surrounding stacks in the matter either of lighting or of sound. Convenient entrance can easily be provided. In brief, the usefulness of the library will be in no wise impaired nor its beauty marred. On the other hand the auditorium will furnish some distinct benefits of importance in addition to the service it will undoubtedly render to students of music. Modern library practice has come to look upon an auditorium as an almost essential adjunct. It is now extensively used for the display of collections of all sorts as well as for lectures and conferences meant to make various classes of books and other material more widely useful. In this particular instance there would also be the advantage of a hall large enough to seat the whole staff of the library, for which desirable purpose no space is now available.

Mrs. Coolidge attaches no conditions to her gift. Furthermore, if it is accepted there is reasonable ground for the expectation that

in case the Congress approves she will supplement it with funds that will in practical effect constitute a worthy endowment.

Your committee on the library has been unable to find any reason why the gift should not be promptly and thankfully accepted. With the example of the Smithsonian Institution before us, there is ground for confidence that the benefactions of donors may wisely be availed of to the common gain, and for hope that other of our people in position thus to serve their fellows will show an equal spirit of far-sighted generosity.

